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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/TIA/ITA, DS/IP/SPC/SO, AF/E,
INR LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/30/2018

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON UNMEE OPERATIONS IN ASMARA

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen for Reason 1.4 (d).

¶1. (C) UNMEE Deputy Chief Security Officer (DCSO) provided RSO and UK Deputy Head of Mission (DHM) with an update June 30 on UNMEE operations in Eritrea. UNMEE has ceased operations in Assab and UNMEE flights are no longer stopping there to refuel. After an approximately two-month wait, the Eritrean Government approved UNMEE's closure in Assab and gave permission for its transfer of equipment. DCSO stated contractors have loaded 17 trucks of UNMEE equipment which will be transported to Asmara within the next day or so. Depreciated and/or old equipment, such as some office supplies, lodging equipment, and air conditioners, will be left. Included in this convoy is one 15,000 liter capacity fuel tank. The equipment will be trucked to the former Indian contingent UNMEE facility located in Adi Quadat, located approximately 12 km south of the UNMEE headquarters in Asmara. Adi Quadat currently holds over 167 containers full of new and used UNMEE equipment pending shipment out of Eritrea after UNMEE's mandate expires. UNMEE currently has 2,340 gallons of fuel in Asmara and is using approximately 78 gallons of fuel per day.

¶2. (C) DCSO stated that after the expiration of UNMEE's mandate, the UN will seek to leave in Asmara a small garrison of department heads and security personnel (approximately 30 persons), but was doubtful the Eritrean Government will allow this group to stay. DCSO expects that the UN will require approximately six months to fully liquidate its equipment.

¶3. (C) DCSO also stated UN officials in New York called UNMEE on June 30 inquiring about rumored military skirmishes between Ethiopia and Eritrea near Bure in SE Eritrea. Neither DCSO, RSO, nor UK DHM have heard any local reports of fighting in that area.

MCMULLEN